



Grains and Breads – What Is a Serving?

Determining serving sizes of grains and breads designed to meet the needs of specific age groups in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) can be a challenge to child care providers. Responses to questions frequently raised with regard to variety, healthfulness, and availability of grain/bread products and children's acceptance of those products will be reviewed in this *Mealtime Memo*.

What is the role of grain in a child's diet?

The answer to this question is both simple and "complex."

- Grains are good sources of complex carbohydrates, which are derived from plants.
- Grains contain B vitamins such as riboflavin, niacin, thiamin, and other B vitamins.
- Grains provide much needed fiber in the diets of both children and adults.

Is there a standard for determining creditable grains and breads?

Creditable grains and breads

- must be made with enriched* or whole-grain flour or fortified;**
- must indicate that the product is enriched or whole-grain made from enriched or whole-grain meal or flour, bran and/or germ; and
- must be provided in the quantities specified.

*Enrichment has been defined as the restoration of vitamins and minerals lost during processing.

**Food fortification has been defined as the addition of one or more essential nutrients to a food.

What are some of the creditable grain and bread products that can be served in the CACFP?

The following list includes just some grain and bread products that may be offered in CACFP:

- Bread sticks, saltine crackers and hard pretzels
- Bagels, biscuits, breads (white, wheat, whole-wheat, Italian, French), pizza crust and tortillas, corn or wheat
- Pancakes, waffles, corn muffins
- Macaroni, noodles, pasta (all shapes and varieties), and rice
- Ready-to-eat breakfast cereal (cold, dry)

Breakfast or Snack only

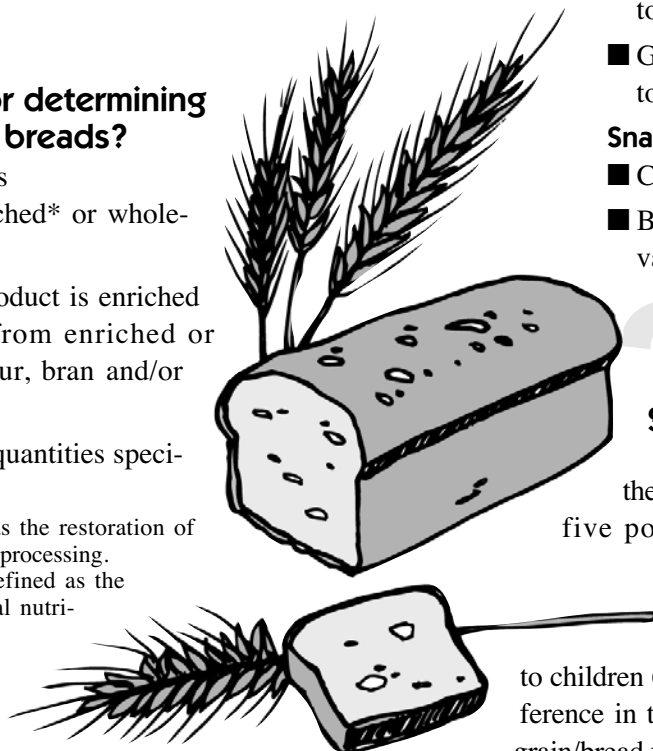
- Granola bars, plain; sweet rolls and toaster pastry (unfrosted)
- Grain fruit bars; sweet rolls and toaster pastry (frosted)

Snack only

- Cake (plain, unfrosted)
- Brownies, plain and cake (all varieties, frosted)

Do portion sizes of grains and breads differ by age group?

"Yes." It can best be explained by the following illustrations. In Table One five popular grain/bread food items are served to children 1-5 years of age. In Table Two the same grain/bread food items are served to children 6 years of age and older. Note the difference in the estimated portion sizes of all five grain/bread food items.



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Table One

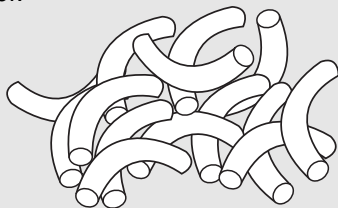
Food Item	Estimated Portion Size
Cereal O's, cold, dry	$\frac{1}{3}$ cup or .5 oz, whichever is less
Small animal crackers	6 each
Granola bar, plain, breakfast or snack only	1 bar, minimum weight 25 grams
Cookie, plain about $2\frac{1}{4}$ ", snack only	2 cookies
Macaroni, noodles, pasta all shapes	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup cooked

These serving sizes meet the meal pattern requirements for children 1-5 years of age.

Table Two

Food Item	Estimated Portion Size
Cereal O's, cold, dry	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup or 1 oz, whichever is less
Small animal crackers	12 each
Granola Bar, Plain, breakfast or snack only	2 bars
Cookie, plain about $2\frac{1}{4}$ " snack only	4 cookies
Macaroni, noodles, pasta all shapes	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked

These serving sizes meet the meal pattern requirements for 6 years of age and older.



Are the CACFP serving sizes of grains/breads different from food product label serving sizes?

There is a difference between the serving size on a package label and a CACFP serving size. Look at the next two figures which demonstrate what is a serving on the Cereal O's food label and what is a CACFP serving of the same food product.



Figure One

Cereal O's Food Label
Nutrition Facts
Serving Size = 1 cup (30g)
Servings per container 10

This food label states a serving size of Cereal O's is 1 cup and the 30 grams in parentheses refers to the weight of the product. The number of servings per container is 10.

Figure Two

Cereal O's CACFP serving
1 Serving = $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (0.5 oz)

This figure states a serving size of Cereal O's is $\frac{1}{3}$ cup by volume and 0.5 oz by weight. This serving size meets the meal pattern requirements for children 1-5 years of age.

Summarizing what we've learned...

- All age groups do not receive the same serving size.
- There is a standard for determining creditable grains and breads.
- There is a difference between the serving size on a food label and the CACFP serving.

Sources

Annex 4-Micronutrient fortification of food: Technology and quality control. Retrieved September 8, 2004, from <http://www.fao.org/docrep/W2840E/w2840e0b.htm>

National Food Service Management Institute. (2003). *From the trainer's tablet: Lessons for family/home child care providers*. Grains and Breads—What Is a Serving? Retrieved September 6, 2004, from <http://www.nfsmi.org/Information/from-the-trainer.html>

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